

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 18, line 10 as follows:

According to the invention, subsequent processing for patterning of the thus-formed workpiece **68** with overlying thin metal and resist or thermoplastic polymer layers **79**, **70** respectively, comprises patterning of the resist or thermoplastic polymer layer **68** **70** by any of the aforementioned techniques, i.e., wet chemical or dry etching (plasma, ion irradiation, etc.), or by thermal imprint lithography as illustrated in FIG. 4, to form a mask including a patterned plurality of recesses extending at least partway through the thickness of resist or thermoplastic polymer layer **70**, depending upon the particular technique utilized for patterning workpiece **68**. Thus, according to certain embodiments of the present invention, e.g., as shown in FIG. 4(C), the recesses may comprise a plurality of compressed portions **74** of resist or thermoplastic polymer layer **70**, and the recesses **74** may or may not receive further treatment for removal of the remaining compressed portions of layer **70** (and possible removal of the respective underlying portions of thin metal layer **79**.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 11 as follows:

Thus, the inventive methodology provides for the rapid, cost-effective, and safe removal of patterned resist or mask layers from workpiece/substrate surfaces subsequent to patterning of the latter, as in the manufacture of high areal desnsity density, patterned magnetic media, e.g., hard disks, which method is applicable irrespective of any chemical and/or physical changes incurred by the resist or mask layer material in the course of patterning processing. Moreover, the inventive methodology is not limited to use as described above in the illustrated examples;

rather, the invention can be practiced with a wide variety of substrates/workpieces, such as, for example, semiconductor substrates utilized in integrated circuit (IC) device manufacture, and the imprinted patterns capable of being formed by the invention are not limited to servo patterns, data tracks, identification, etc., for magnetic recording media, and may, for example, include metallization patterns of semiconductor IC devices.